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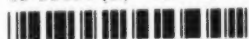
Original: English

**Letter dated 19 September 2003 from the Permanent
Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed
to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to draw your attention to the following statement by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union on the coup d'état in Guinea-Bissau, issued on 18 September 2003 (see annex).

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Marcello Spatafora
Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations



Annex to the letter dated 19 September 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Statement on the coup d'état in Guinea-Bissau issued on 18 September 2003 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union

The European Union is strongly opposed to unconstitutional seizure of power and therefore condemns the military coup that occurred in Guinea-Bissau on 14 September 2003.

The European Union reiterates its attachment to democratic principles and to free and fair elections, which are the only means for a change of government.

The European Union takes note of the announcement by the Military Committee of its intention to ensure a prompt return to constitutional order and civilian rule in the country.

The European Union is committed to work together with the international community, including the United Nations, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States — whose constructive attitude has been commendable — and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, to support a quick restoration of constitutional legality, democratic principles, especially the organization of early and credible elections, and national reconciliation in Guinea-Bissau.

These essential elements remain the basis for the continued partnership between the European Union and Guinea-Bissau, which could help, inter alia, to overcome the economic and social crisis that the country has been facing recently.

The acceding countries, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia, the associated countries, Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, and the European Free Trade Association countries, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with the present statement.